Research Notes for Patrick Spollen/Spellman (1820-1857)

Research Overview:

Patrick Spollen is an Irish immigrant whose record combines unusual documentary clarity with striking gaps. He is well documented at the point of immigration and naturalization: his ship's arrival in Boston is dated and named, he is recorded traveling with two children, and he left signed naturalization papers stating his place of origin. At the same time, records typically expected for a man of his age and circumstances are missing. No birth record has been located in Ireland, no marriage record survives for either his first or second marriage, no obituary has been found, no burial location is known, and no probate record exists. Patrick's life is therefore preserved unevenly, with moments of exceptional visibility surrounded by silence.

Patrick was born in County Roscommon in 1820 and arrived in Boston in 1849 with his children Ellen and Michael, following the death or disappearance of an unknown first wife. He married Margaret Mitchell shortly after his arrival, and two children were born in Massachusetts. The 1855 Massachusetts State Census provides the only full household snapshot of Patrick's lifetime, showing him living with Margaret and all four children. Within a year of completing his naturalization, Patrick died in Haverhill in 1857 at the age of thirty-six. The record closes abruptly, leaving unresolved questions about his origins, his first marriage, and the absence of burial documentation where one would normally be expected.

The Name "Patrick Spaulding" in the Record

Patrick's documented surnames follow a clear chronological sequence. At his arrival in Boston in 1849, his surname was recorded by officials as Spollen. In 1856, Patrick signed his naturalization documents as Patrick Spellman, marking the only instance where his name appears in his own hand. The surname Spaulding does not appear in any record created during Patrick's lifetime.

After his death, a Boston city directory lists his widow, Margaret, under both Spellman and Spaulding at the same address. and the children who later settled in Clinton, Iowa, consistently used the surname Spaulding.

Patrick never used the surname Spaulding during his lifetime; it appears only in records created by his family after his death, and all of his descendants later carried that non-Irish surname.

Speculative Narrative:

Intentionally left blank.

Time Line:

10 May 1820 - Birth at Kilglass, Roscommon, Ireland.[1]

Parents named as Michael and Mary in his Massachusetts death record.

Other evidence, including strong family DNA clusters, points to County Roscommon and the Roosky area, though the place of birth remains unresolved.

1844 - Marriage to an unknown woman, possibly related to his second wife, Margaret Mitchell, in Ireland.[2]

No record has been found identifying this woman by name. However, significant DNA matches connected to this line trace back to Owen Mitchell and Mary Creed of County Roscommon, suggesting a possible connection through this unknown wife. Owen Mitchell shares a surname with Patrick's second wife, Margaret Mitchell, though no relationship has been established.

7 Nov 1844 - Birth of daughter Ellen Spellman (1844 - 1920) at Kilglass, Roscommon, Ireland.[3]

1846 - Birth of son W Michael Spellman (1846 - 1887) at Kilglass, Roscommon, Ireland.[4]

30 Oct 1849 - Arrival at Boston, Suffolk, Massachusetts.[5] recorded under the surname *Spollen*.

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[1] Birth record

[2] Marriage to an unknown woman

[3] Birth of daughter Ellen Spellman

[4] Birth of son W Michael Spellman

[5] "United States, New England Petitions for Naturalization Index, 1791-1906", , *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:VXRZ-7DM: Sun Mar 10 21:54:28 UTC 2024), Entry for Patrick Spellman, 1851.

1850 - Marriage to Margaret Mitchell (1821 - 1893), possibly at Haverhill, Essex, Massachusetts, or a Gretna Green location.

12 Jul 1851 - Birth of son Thomas Henry Spellman at Haverhill, Essex, Massachusetts. [6]

3 Feb 1853 - Birth of daughter Mary E Spellman at Haverhill, Essex, Massachusetts. [7]

The only full household snapshot during Patrick's lifetime

1855 - Massachusetts State Census at Haverhill, Essex, Massachusetts. [8]

Patrick Spelman, 34

Margarette Spelman, 34

Ellen Spelman, 12

Michael Spellman, 10

Thomas Spelman, 4

Mary Spellman, 2

Sep 1856 - Naturalization Oath of Allegiance at Essex, Massachusetts.[9]

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[6] "Massachusetts State Vital Records, 1841-1925", , *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:FXCQ-WHL: Thu May 23 01:35:02 UTC 2024), Entry for Thomas Spelman and Patrick Spelman, 12 Jul 1851.

[7] "Massachusetts State Vital Records, 1841-1925", , *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:FXCC-P11: Thu May 23 01:42:13 UTC 2024), Entry for Mary Spillman and Patrick Spillman, 2 Feb 1853.

[8] "Massachusetts State Census, 1855", , *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MQ4T-4WY : Sat Mar 09 10:35:38 UTC 2024), Entry for Patrick Spelman and Margerette Spelman, 1855.

[9] "United States, New England Petitions for Naturalization Index, 1791-1906", , *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:VXRZ-7DM: Sun Mar 10 21:54:28 UTC 2024), Entry for Patrick Spellman, 1851.

Sep 1856 - Naturalization Petition at Newburyport, Essex, Massachusetts.[10]

Patrick signed the naturalization documents as "Patrick Spellman."

16 Jul 1857 - Death at Haverhill, Essex, Massachusetts.[11]

Burial at a Cemetery, possibly at Haverhill, Essex, Massachusetts.[12]

After Patrick's death, the 1869 Boston city directories list both "Margaret Spellman" and "Margaret Spaulding" at the same address. The children who later settled in Clinton, Iowa, used the surname Spaulding.

W. Michael Spellman

Patrick's son, W. Michael Spellman, was born in Ireland in 1846 and traveled to the United States with his father and sister Ellen in 1849. He appears consistently in early records: in the 1855 Massachusetts State Census in Haverhill as a ten-year-old born in Ireland, and again in Boston records after Patrick's death. In 1865, he is listed in the Massachusetts State Census as W. Michael Spellman, age nineteen, a harness maker, born in Ireland. This is the last known record in which he can be identified with confidence. No subsequent records have been located for him under either the Spellman or Spaulding surname, and his later life and death remain undocumented.

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[10] "United States, New England, Petitions for Naturalization, 1787-1906", , *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:6P77-YJ3W: 17 September 2024), Patrick Spellman, 1851.

[11] "Massachusetts State Vital Records, 1841-1925", , *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:N7LC-PT1: Wed May 22 21:44:08 UTC 2024), Entry for Patrick Spellman and Michael Spellman, 1857.

[12] Find a Grave

Children

After Patrick's death, his surviving children all ended up in Clinton, Iowa, though the record does not explain why the family left Boston or what connections drew them west**.** Ellen, born in Ireland, married John Clarke and settled in Clinton, where her descendants are documented. Thomas and Mary, both born in Massachusetts, also appear there as young adults within extended family households. The movement of nearly the entire family to Iowa points to a family connection that has not yet been identified.

Appendix: Spaulding Family Line Research Narrative and Findings

Tracing the Spaulding family line, starting with Patrick Spaulding (born around 1811 in County Roscommon, Ireland) and Margaret Mitchell (also born around 1811 in County Roscommon), has been challenging, especially since the family used different surnames over time. Patrick came to the United States in the mid-1800s with two of his children, but we're not exactly sure when Margaret arrived, as she wasn't listed on the ship with them. Eventually, the family settled in Haverhill, Essex County, Massachusetts, where they continued to grow. Despite thorough searching, records for Patrick's death and the births of his children, Thomas and Mary, have been hard to find under the name Spaulding. This led us to look into other spellings, notably "Spellman," which kept coming up in related records.

Discovery of the Spellman Surname

We searched Massachusetts Vital Records (1841-1910) for Spaulding births and deaths in Haverhill. When nothing came up, we expanded the search to include variations in spelling. That's when a pattern emerged with records under the name Spellman. This led us to a Haverhill death record dated July 16, 1857, for a Patrick Spellman, age thirty-six, who was listed as married, born in Ireland, and the son of Michael and Mary Spellman. This record aligns well with what we know of Patrick Spaulding's details and timeline, as we were fairly certain Patrick died before the 1860 Census. His age and birthplace also match known facts about Patrick Spaulding, suggesting that these two names likely refer to the same person.

Insights from the Birth Records of Thomas and Mary

The connection between Spellman and Spaulding started to make more sense when we checked Thomas and Mary's birth records. According to previous records, Thomas Spaulding was born on July 7, 1852. But we found a birth record for a Thomas Spellman, son of Patrick and Margaret, dated

July 12, 1851. Similarly, while Mary's birth date was noted as February 3, 1854, we found a birth record for a Mary "Spillman," born February 2, 1853. The dates don't match exactly, but minor discrepancies like these were common for Irish families back then, so these records likely do refer to the same children, Thomas and Mary Spaulding.

What We Found in the 1855 Massachusetts State Census

We checked the 1855 Massachusetts State Census for Haverhill to dig further into this possible name variation. Initially, we looked for the name Spaulding and found only one family with that name in Haverhill, but they weren't related to Patrick and Margaret's line. Switching to "Spellman," we found a listing for Patrick and "Margaretta" Spellman, both born in Ireland, living with their children: Ellen, age twelve, born in Ireland; Michael, age ten, born in Ireland; Thomas, age four, born in Massachusetts; and Mary, age two-and-a-half.

This census also listed Michael, a son born around 1845 in Ireland. Michael appears on the ship manifest Patrick referenced in his naturalization application, adding another piece to the family's story. Ellen's age and birthplace match previous records, showing she was born in Ireland around 1844.

Tracking the Family in Boston, 1860-1865

By 1860, Margaret, now widowed, had moved to Boston with her children. The U.S. Federal Census for Boston's Ward 8 shows Margaret with Ellen (age sixteen), Thomas (age nine), and Mary (age seven). Patrick is absent, supporting our belief that he passed away before 1860. The census does not list a specific address, so we cross-checked neighboring families to identify where they lived.

In the 1860 Boston City Directory, we found "Margaret Spaulding, widow" at 101 South Street, with no entry under Spellman. However, in 1861, both a

"Margaret Spaulding, widow" and a "Margaret Spellman, widow" were listed at this same address, suggesting a possible continued use of both surnames. By the time of the 1865 Massachusetts State Census, Margaret appears as "Spellman" again, living with W. Michael Spellman, age nineteen (born in Ireland); Thomas, age fourteen (born in Massachusetts); and Mary, age twelve (also born in Massachusetts). Checking the 1865 Boston City Directory confirmed they were still at 94 South Street.

Extra Steps to Clarify the Spellman/Spaulding Connection

To better understand why the family might have used both names, we looked into probate records, legal name change documents, and city directories from the 1850s and 1860s, covering both Essex County, where Haverhill is located, and Suffolk County, where Boston is located. We found no probate or name change records for a switch from Spellman to Spaulding, nor did we locate anything in the "List of Persons Whose Names Have Been Changed in Massachusetts: 1780-1892." We also reviewed Boston City Directories from 1860 to 1870, but no additional relatives were listed under either name.

We also checked the Haverhill Gazette newspaper for any announcements regarding Patrick Spellman's death. We reviewed issues from June through September of 1857, and the rest of the year in case there were references to his family. Unfortunately, there was no mention of Patrick's death or the family in general.

Further Search for Ellen, Michael, and Other Descendants

Ellen wasn't hard to trace—she left Boston and later settled in Clinton, Iowa, after marrying Peter Clarke, as confirmed by records in Clinton. It's Michael who has been difficult to track. He appears in the 1865 census as "W. Michael Spellman," listed as a nineteen-year-old harness maker born in Ireland. However, we found no additional Boston City Directory listings for either "Michael" or "W. Michael" during this time. We considered searching

Clinton, Iowa, since other family members settled there, but so far, Michael hasn't shown up in Iowa records under either name.

We also tried finding records of Patrick and Margaret's marriage in Irish church records and baptismal records for Ellen and W. Michael, but nothing surfaced under either surname. Many church records are unavailable online, which might explain the lack of results.

Next Steps

The evidence so far strongly suggests that the Spellman and Spaulding records belong to the same family, although we haven't determined why both names were used. Further record searches might yield more clues, especially in church records at the Archdiocese of Boston Archives. The archives have baptism and marriage records from four Haverhill churches, including Saint Gregory's (established in 1850). These records could provide baptisms for Thomas and Mary Spellman, and the names of their sponsors offer potential new leads.

We also recommend exploring Clinton, Iowa, where other family members may have gone, as Michael may have used the Spellman surname while others stuck with Spaulding. This could explain his absence from other Boston records.

In future research, it will be key to monitor both Spellman and Spaulding to build a fuller picture of the family's history and understand the use of these surnames.

The discovery of Patrick Spollen's naturalization papers is a major breakthrough, revealing the ship he took to Boston, the date of his arrival, and that he traveled with his two children, Ellen and Michael. The papers also provide his birthplace. There is a theory that Margaret Mitchell may have been his second wife, but Patrick's first wife remains unknown.

A DNA cluster points to a couple, Owen Mitchell and Mary Creed, in County Roscommon. If I am not related to Patrick's second wife, Margaret Mitchell, then it's possible that Patrick's unknown first wife was related to her, which could lead to important discoveries.